

# Iowa Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

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State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

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## **Iowa's Long-Term Care Ombudsman's Office Reminds Residents in Assisted Living and Elder Group Homes of Their Rights**

*October is National Resident's Rights Month*

(Des Moines, IA) The month of October is a time to honor and reflect on the individual rights of residents in nursing facilities, assisted living and other long-term care settings. Resident's Rights Month allows us a specific opportunity to focus on rights and to increase awareness of the rights of individuals residing in long-term care settings. In this final, of a series of four releases focusing on Residents Rights Month, the rights of tenants residing in assisted living and elder group home is our focus.

Generally, assisted living and elder group homes provide a combination of housing and supportive services for individuals who do not need nursing home level of care but do require more personal care and health services than independent living. It is important to explore your options when deciding what type of care and living arrangement is best for you. It is also important to know your rights. In Iowa, the law governing assisted living facilities and elder group homes is the landlord tenant law. This is very different than the rights set out in federal and state law for residents in nursing facilities.

"Once you decide on a place that is right for you, make sure you or your legal representative understand what you are agreeing to by reviewing all forms and agreements before signing. Take time to read and review the written information on resident choice and independence, ability to remain in the residence, the costs for the initial services and for any additional services that might be needed as well as your rights as a tenant. If you have questions, they need to be answered and explained in an understandable manner." Iowa's State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Deanna Clingan-Fischer, stated.

All tenants that live in assisted living facilities and elder group homes have the right to:

- Be treated with consideration, respect, and full recognition of personal dignity and autonomy.
- Receive care, treatment and services which are adequate and appropriate
- Receive respect and privacy in the tenant's medical care program. Written consent of the tenant shall be obtained before information about the tenant is shared with anyone.
- Be free from mental and physical abuse
- Receive a reasonable response (from the manager and staff) to all requests
- Associate and communicate privately with persons and groups of the tenant's choice
- Manage, if able, their own financial affairs
- Present grievances and recommend changes in program policies and services without fear of reprisal or interference.

Individuals with concerns or questions regarding Assisted Living Facilities and Elder Group Homes may contact their local Long-Term Care Ombudsman **by calling toll-free: 1-866/236-1430 or by visiting [www.iowaaging.gov](http://www.iowaaging.gov).**

*\*This is the final in a series of four releases on National Resident Rights Month (October)\**